



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 5
77 WEST JACKSON BOULEVARD
CHICAGO, IL 60604-3590

REPLY TO THE ATTENTION OF

03 DEC 2003

R-19J

Honorable Tim Pawlenty
Governor of Minnesota
St. Paul, Minnesota 55155

Dear Governor Pawlenty:

Thank you for making recommendations on 8-hour ozone air quality designations. Pursuant to the Clean Air Act (CAA), the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is required to promulgate designations for new or revised standards, such as the 8-hour ozone standard. Earlier this year, we entered into a consent decree that requires us to promulgate designations by April 15, 2004.

We have reviewed the July 18, 2003, letter from Sheryl Corrigan, Commissioner, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency, submitting Minnesota's recommendations on air quality designations for the 8-hour ozone standard. This letter is to inform you that the EPA does not intend to make modifications to your recommendation of statewide attainment. The entire State of Minnesota should be designated as attainment/unclassifiable for the 8-hour ozone standard. We will continue to work with your office as we move forward to make final designations. Also, please note that EPA will address designations of Indian country lands through a separate concurrent process with the Tribes in Minnesota.

The CAA defines a nonattainment area as any area that does not meet (or that contributes to ambient air quality in a nearby area that does not meet) the national primary or secondary ambient air quality standard for the pollutant. EPA guidance indicates that Minnesota should use the larger of the Consolidated Metropolitan Statistical Area (CMSA), Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), or the 1-hour ozone nonattainment area as the presumptive boundary for 8-hour ozone nonattainment areas. The guidance provides 11 factors that Minnesota should consider in determining whether to modify the presumptive boundaries. We have reviewed your submission and believe it is consistent with our guidance.


EPA has been tracking preliminary 2003 ozone monitoring data and their impact on areas' 2001-2003 design values. EPA will

continue to closely review monitoring data for differences that may have occurred throughout the remainder of the 2003 ozone season or as a result of data handling procedures to determine if it might affect the State's recommended designation.

To advance this process, please submit your final 2003 monitoring data into the Air Quality System as quickly as possible, if it has not already been done. In addition, please submit the 8-hour design values to Stephen Rothblatt, of my staff, by official letter, by December 17, 2003.

We look forward to a continued dialog with Minnesota as we work to finalize the designations for the 8-hour ozone standard. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Skinner", written over the typed name.

Thomas W. Skinner
Regional Administrator

cc: Sheryl Corrigan, Commissioner
Minnesota Pollution Control Agency